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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RIGA 000027

SENSITIVE
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MNUC, PGOV, PREL, UNGA, LG

SUBJECT: LATVIA CONCURS WITH U.S. COMMITMENT TO CORE NPT
GOALS

REF: A. SECSTATE 129517 B. SECSTATE 126209

Classified By: Brian Phipps, Counselor for Political and Economic Affairs, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Latvia is in full accord with the U.S. Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty goals of strengthening non-proliferation, promoting disarmament and fostering the development of peaceful nuclear energy. Latvia supports the universality of the NPT and the Additional Protocol. Latvian officials welcome U.S. leadership on strengthening the non-proliferation regime, including our renewed commitment to seek ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and our ongoing negotiations with the Russian Federation to conclude a new START agreement. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) The Embassy delivered ref B points to the MFA's Head of the Nonproliferation and Arms Control Division, Raimonds Oskalns, on January 7. In discussing the NPT RevCon, we drew on the points provided in ref A to publicize the U.S. record of cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy in support of the NPT. Oskalns said Latvia welcomes these points and the U.S. commitment to uphold its treaty obligations in this regard. He confirmed that Latvia will participate in the RevCon in May 2010, but has not yet determined the level of its participation.

Renewed Commitment to NPT Pillars

¶3. (SBU) Oskalns said that Latvia seeks a renewed commitment from the entire international community for the NPT's goals. Latvia would like to see the 2010 RevCon conclude with an action plan for each of the three NPT pillars: strengthening nonproliferation; promoting disarmament; and ensuring the responsible development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Universality

¶4. (SBU) Oskalns stated that Latvia believes the possession of nuclear weapons by states outside the NPT and non-compliance with the Treaty's provisions by States Parties to the Treaty undermine non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Latvia appeals to non-member states to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapon states. Latvia also wishes to extend the universality of NPT safeguards agreements and the Additional Protocol to all States Parties. The GOL believes the RevCon should be used to call on all NPT countries to accede to the Additional Protocol along with comprehensive safeguards agreements to fulfill States Parties' obligations under Article III of the NPT.

Noncompliance with NPT Obligations

¶ 15. (SBU) Continuing, Oskalns told us that Latvia seeks resolute action and determination of consequences in cases of non-compliance with NPT obligations. He noted North Korea and Iran as examples of how a consistent response by NPT members in response to crises would contribute to a successful NPT review. Although Latvia supports the sovereign right of countries to withdraw from the NPT, it believes those states are still bound by their actions conducted prior to withdrawal that violate their obligations under the treaty. The GOL believes the 2010 NPT RevCon should adopt measures to discourage withdrawal from the treaty and deal with the consequences in case of withdrawal, including suspension of nuclear cooperation.

Expectations for U.S. Action

¶ 16. (SBU) Oskalns welcomed renewed U.S. leadership on strengthening the non-proliferation regime and expressed hope the U.S. will ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. Likewise, he wished that the U.S. will conclude a significant reduction in nuclear weapons via a new START treaty with the Russian Federation in advance of the 2010 RevCon.

¶ 17. (C) Oskalns expressed concern over the continued non-compliance by Russia with the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty and with recent statements by Russian PM Putin about exacting additional concessions from the U.S. as

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a prerequisite to concluding the START negotiations. Oskalns said privately that he is concerned that the U.S. might concede too much to Russia in the START negotiations and that this could undermine the America's ability to secure the treaty's ratification. Oskalns also expressed concern that there may not be enough support in the U.S. Senate for the CTBT. He questioned the U.S. timeline for signing a new START treaty and stressed that it would be vital to the success of the RevCon for this treaty to be signed in advance of the start of the conference.

¶ 18. (C) Comment: Latvia's approach to non-proliferation issues is influenced by three main factors that are directly related to the three NPT pillars. First, the Latvian interest in eventually constructing a nuclear energy power plant reinforces support for the peaceful purposes pillar of the NPT. Second, Latvia's fear of Russian power bolsters its desire to see greater disarmament and more transparent implementation of disarmament agreements, particularly the CFE. Finally, Latvia generally follows the EU consensus position on issues such as the imposition of sanctions for noncompliance. End comment.

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